Form 10-300 (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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Begun in 1866-67, the construction of the present Pumping Station and Water Tower was executed according to the design of William W. Boyington, known for the design of the old Stock Exchange and the first University of Chicago. The Sumping Station and Water Tower are built of rough faced Joliet limestone blocks in a style known as 'castellated gothic'. The Pumping Station is two stories high with a low-pitched roof. Turrets rise from every corner of the structure. A tall limestone smokestack, which is a smaller and less elaborate version of the shaft of the tower, rises from the east side of the building. The exterior of the Tower is devided into five sections which rise in diminishing size from the lowest which is 40 feet square. Turrets extend up from the four corners of each of the three rectangular lower sections, the walls of which are surmounted by cut stone battlements. From this three part base rises an octagonal shaft with a turreted and battlemented top, which, in turn, is capped by a cupola of steel with a copper roof. The Pumping Station presently is connected by a series of tunnels under Lake Michigan to several cribs. Chesbrough as responsible for the crib two miles out which pumps 2750 gallons of water per stroke from its well. Other cribs include one which is four miles out, another called the northeast crib, and the Carter H. Harrison crib. Being quite an engineering flattef lts day, Chasbrough's crib ought to be included as part of the Historic Site.

The exteriors of the buildings survived the Chicago Fire of 1871 with minor damage, while the interior of the Pumping Station was gutted, cutting off water supply to the city for eight days. Damage was repaired quickly. In 1906, extensive repair again was necessary, this time in connection with the installation of new pumping equiptment, but the facade was not altered. The Tower and Pumping Station retain their dominance over Michigan Avenue (then Pine Street) hiding behind their decorative facades sophisticated water works machinery which still serves the area from Madison Street north to Fullerton Avenue and from Lake Michigan west to Ashland Avenue.

History-

Description-

The first city-wide water works was begun by a private company at the foot of Chicago Avenue in 1852, and the buildings were completed the next year. Water was pumped from a crib 600 feet offshore into three reservoirs one on each side of the city, and from them into an evergrowing system of pipes into the houses of people who payed for the service. With the rapid growth of the city, the double problem of water supply and waste disposal became more complex. Sewage was ejected into the river, and carried into the lake, resulting in a high incidence of typhoid. In 1855, the Chicago Board of Sewerage Commission was formed to seek out solutions to the problems of waste disposal and drainage which were hindering commercial development of the city, rain and water not being adequately removed from the business streets. Ellis Sylvester Chesbrough was selected to tackle the problem. Chesbrough, who was made City Engineer, had quit school at the age of nine because his father's business

Form 10-300a (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

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Description (No. &) History cont.-

had failed. He worked in a counting house and them became a chainman with a company surveying railway land in the Baltimore area. His engineering education was received at this time because some of his co-workers were army engineers. He was laid off due to the depression after the panic of 1837. In 1842 he went to stay with hid father in Providence, Rhode Island, and frequented a railroad workshop where he learned the practical use of tools. He tried farming for awhile but was not successful. He then returned to his profession as chief engineer of a division of the Boston water works. He was a quick learner and added hydraulic engineering to his skills. In 1851 he became Boston's chief engineer and remained there until he came to Chicago.

As City Engineer, Chesbrough began to push for a water tunnel out under the lake to a point where it was certain the water would be pure. The original private water works company had been taken over in 1861 by the newly formed Board of Public Works. Chesbrough convinced the board to adopt his scheme for eliminating the water and sewage problems and ground was broken in 1864. The tunnel 66 feet beneath the lake bed and extending two miles from shore, was completed in December of 1866, attracting world wide attention as an engineerin g feat. Construction of the present Pumpin Station was proceeding slowly in order that the water supply would not be interrupted, and a new third pump, capable of pumping 18 million gallons of water a day was installed. At this time, pumping engines sent water into the mains in a series of surges so that at one moment there would be no pressure and at the next, pressure so great that it could cause flooding or damage to the pipes. To equalize the pressure, a vertical pipe, called a standpipe, eas inserted in the horizontal pipe leading from the pump, so that the excessive pressure would be relieved by the water's rising into the standpipe. It is this standpipe that the Water Tower was built to house. The pipe became defunct when new pumping equiptment was installed in 1906, and was removed in 1911. It was during this period until 1914, when fire-damaged masonry and the original irron cupola were replaced. A new staircase was also added.

Presentation in Existing Surveys (No. 6) cont.-

Illinois Historic Structures Survey 1972 (state) 1800 South Prairie Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60610

Commission on Historical and Architectural Landmarks 1973 (local) 320 North Clark Street, Room 800, Chicago, Illinois (designated a "Chicago Landmark" by the City Council, Oct. 6, 1971)

Form 10-330a (July 1969) UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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Geographical Data

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- B 16-448,315-E 16-4,638,360-N
- C 16-448,315-E 16-4,638,260-N
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Form 10-300 (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

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	tional Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Pul	blic Law		National Register.		
	89-665). I hereby nominate this property for i	inclusion		National Register.		
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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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Construction of the Pumping Station started in 1866; the Water Tower was begun in 1867. Both are built of rough-faced yellow limestone blocks, in a style commonly known as castellated Gothic.

In 1871, the Chicago Fire caused only minor damage to the Water Tower, while the interior of the Pumping Station was gutted. The water supply of the city was virtually cut off for eight days. Damage to the building was quickly repaired, however, so that water distribution could return to normal.

The Water Tower was constructed to house the standpipe, 3 feet wide and 138 feet high, that was essential to stabilize the pressure of the city's early water supply system. The standpipe, unnecessary after new pumping equipment was installed in 1906, was removed in 1911. The exterior of the Tower is divided into five sections, which rise in diminishing size from the lowest, which is 40 feet square. Turrets extend up from the four corners of each of the three rectangular lower sections, the walls of which are surmounted by cut-stone battlements. From this three-part base rises an octagonal shaft with a turreted and battlemented top, which, in turn, is capped by a cupola of steel with a copper roof. Extensive restoration was undertaken from 1911 to 1914, when fire-damaged masonry was replaced; a new staircase installed, and the original iron cupola replaced with the present unit.

The Pumping Station is identical in style to the Water Tower. It is two stories high, with a low-pitched hipped roof. Turrets rise from every corner of the structure. A tall limestone smokestake—a smaller and less elaborate version of the shaft of the shaft of the Tower—rises from the east side of the building. Extensive repair was undertaken in connection with the installation of new pumping equipment in 1906. The Pumping Station is still in operation and serves the area from Madison Street north to Fullerton Avenue and from Lake Michigan west to Ashland Avenue.

PERIOD (Check One or More as	Appropriate)		
Pre-Columbian	16th Century	☐ 18th Century	20th Century
15th Century	☐ 17th Century	∑ 19th Century	
SPECIFIC DATE(S) (!! Applical	ole and Known) Constr	uction completed	1869.
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Ch	eck One or More as Appropri	ate)	
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The Water Tower and Pumping Station are Chicago's only physical link with pre-Fire history in the central area of the City, since the two structures were the only buildings in this area to survive the Chicago Fire of 1871. The district is a typical example of the public architecture of its day as well as of the eclectic movement in America following the Civil War. The buildings are not considered an architectural tour de force, but they are, along with the water cribs out in audacity which made Chicago's development possible. The district is the land terminus for the tunnel which supplied Chicago's demand for water. The tunnel was dug under Lake Michigan for a distance of two miles, a most notable feat of 19th century American engineering. This district is also a clue to the development of urban America in the 1800s. The Old Water Tower was not really a tower but rather a mask, hiding behind its decorative facade the sophisticated machinery of a water works system, an expression of the idea that a structure could be aesthically pleasing as well as utilitarian. This area, prior to the Fire and for many years thereafter, was a most fashionable and prominent resim dential neighborhood with Pine Street (Michigan Avenue) being its major thorough fare. The district was a solution to the problems of reality within the framework of the 19th century aesthetics and beliefs of what a city should be. All that remains today of that past era is this district. The tower at one time dominated Pine Street as it today dominates Michigan Avenue, a landmark to civic pride. The district was designated a "Chicago Landmark" by the City Council in 1971, and was declared a National Landmark by

the American Society of Civil Engineers in 1973.

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Form 10-300a (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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Illinois Historic Structures Survey (state)
 1972
 1800 South Prairie Avenue, Chicago, Illinois

Commission on Chicago Historical & Architectural Landmarks (local) 1973 320 North Clark Street, Room 800, Chicago, Illinois (Designated as a "Chicago Landmark" by the City Council, October 6, 1971)

Historical and Architectural Commission on Chicago 320 North Clark Street Chicago, Illinois 60610 Landmarks

PHOTO CREDIT: Commission on Chicago Historical and Architectural Landmarks, STREET AND NUMBER: The East and West sides of North Michigan Avenue between FOR NPS USE ONLY View towards the northeast, showing the Water Tower (left), and the Rm. 800, Chicago, III., 60610 ENTRY NUMBER Richard Nickel, Photographer Illinois Cook AND/OR HISTORIC: Chicago Avenue Water Tower and Pumping Station COUNTY STATE CODE COUNTY: (Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph) NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CITY OR TOWN: COMMON: Old Chicago Water Tower District PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM 4 IDENTIFICATION DESCRIDE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. Chicago Illinois 3. PHOTO REFERENCE VEGATIVE FILED AT: 2. LOCATION STATE: 1. NAME

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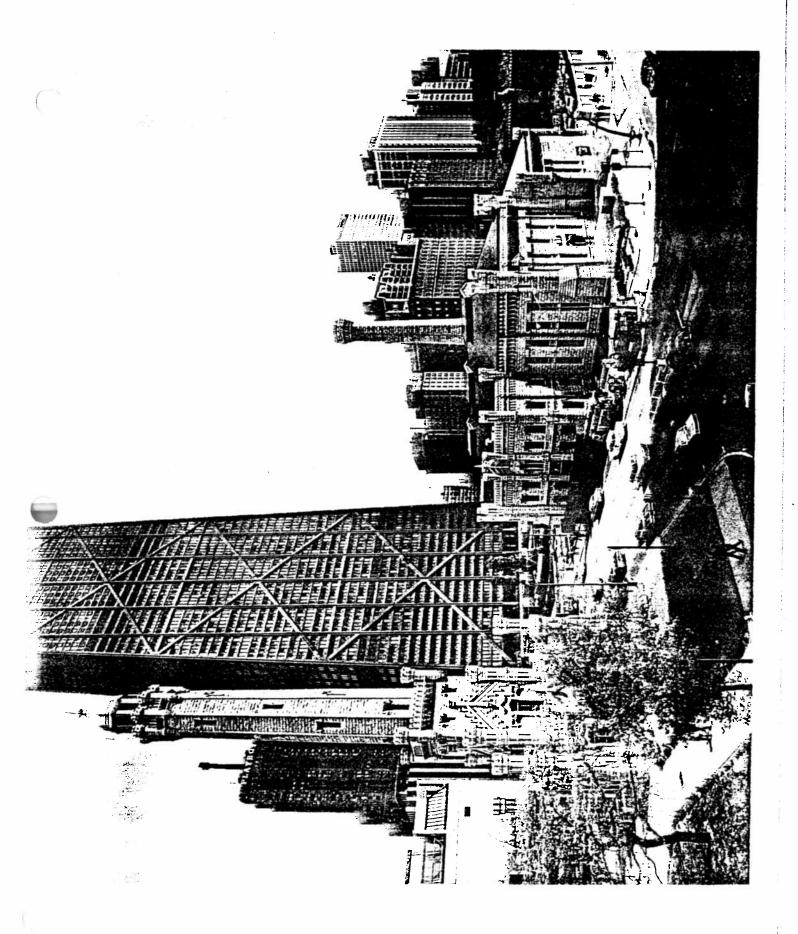
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Pumping Station (right), as well as Michigan Avenue, with the John

Hancock Building in the background.



Commission on Chicago
Historical and Architectural
Landmarks
320 North Clark Street
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

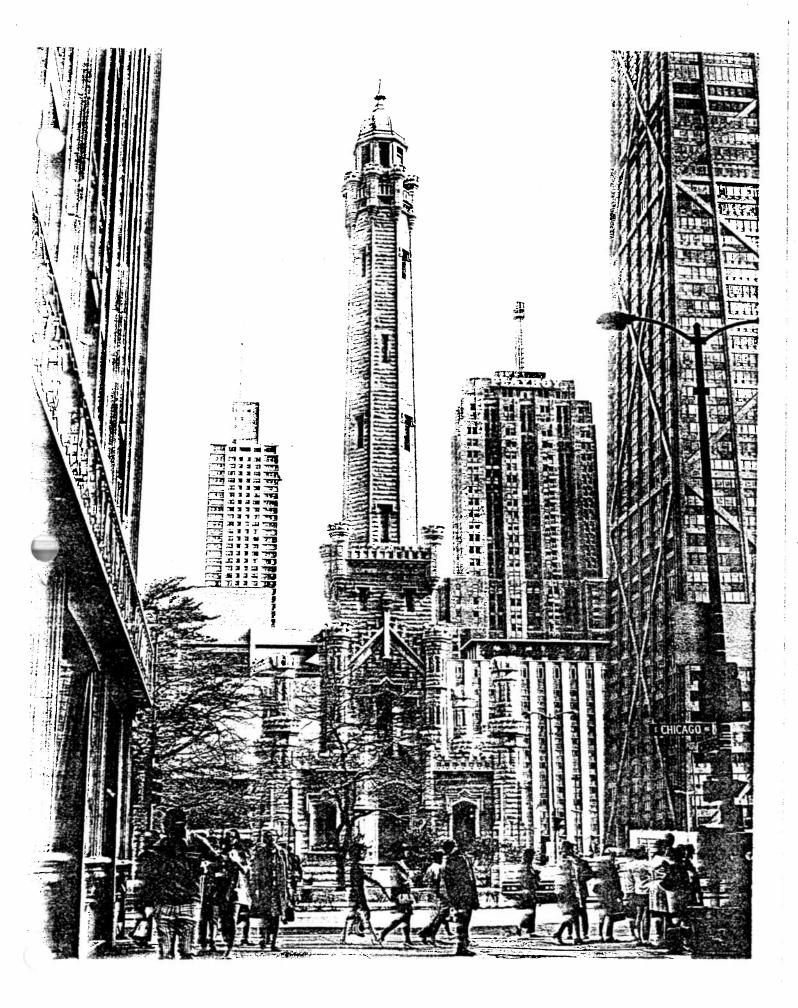
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	View looking North from the Southwest corner of N. Michigan Ave. and E. Chicago Ave., showing the Water Tower.				

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Form 10-301 (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY MAP FORM

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